

TASK FOR FOCH AN ONEROUS ONE

Loss of Initiative Chief Weakness of Allies—Numbers Becoming Equal

ON RHEIMS-SOISSONS LINE

Repington Says Generalissimo Is Facing Problem Unless Men Are Forthcoming.

(By Lieut.-Col. Repington.)
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London, June 4.—The reinforced German armies under Gen. von Boehm and Von Below are still alone engaged in the battle which began on Monday last, and no fresh movement in other sectors was reported up to yesterday afternoon. These two armies, which were formerly numbered only in the hundreds, but have been strengthened for the attack and are now variously estimated at from twenty-five to forty divisions (a German division is composed of about 14,000 men).

I have seen no positive statement of their present strength. We have not been favorably placed to secure such an estimate, and the surest unexpected depth of their penetration into the French lines may have induced the German main headquarters to send forward more troops to confirm the successes gained.

Rheims Closely Beset.

I propose today to offer a few remarks upon the situation on the new battlefield. On the allied right at Rheims the Germans claim to have captured the defenses to the northwest of the town, including the northern parts of La Neuville and Béhém. Thus Rheims is closely beset and liable to fall into the enemy's hands, but so long as the Moronvillers position, further east, the scene of one of Gen. Petain's most complete triumphs, remains in the hands of the French, no progress southward can be made by the Germans between the Vesle and the Sûppe.

West of Rheims four British divisions, which have seen all the best of the fighting since March 21, stand interpolated in the French line and by all accounts have fought splendidly, though we have no direct report from their commander. They were last heard of on the Thillois-Brouillet line, but the loss of Vesilly by the French may have compelled our divisions once more to retire to preserve the general alignment.

To the south of them and north of the Marne is an elevated and wooded region known as Montargis di Rheims, which offers great advantages for defense. If adequate preparations have been made for it, (The Germans have reached the Marne.) It is on the British left in this quarter and in the center of the new battlefield that the Germans have met their hardest every day since Monday last.

Momentum Not Yet Spent.

Vesilly, Coulaines and Fore-en-Tardenois were all in their hands by Thursday last. Yesterday they made more progress southward and the momentum of the attack was not yet spent.

Between the towns named and the Marne there is a region of hill, forest and wood where we must assume the enemy will be checked, for his arrival on the Marne and the consequential interruption of the Paris-Châlons railway would be very disagreeable events.

The situation on a line from Fore-en-Tardenois to the little River Crise has not yet been defined for us except that the Germans appear to claim Ville Montreuil, but on the Crise itself, and particularly the village of Crise, the southwestern exits from Soissons, and for some way to the southward, the French hold the Crise firmly and occupy a good position.

North of the Aisne the battle still rages for possession of the ground won by Gen. Petain's victory at Malmaison, ground which the enemy must cover, because its possession will enable him to connect up with his two great attacks and drive the French away from the Ailette and behind the Aisne. Until Thursday it was from the east only that the Germans were attacking here, and that day they stood on the line of Soissons-Châlons-Chézy-aumont.

German Attack Extends.

But yesterday their attack on this sector was aided by supplementary assaults delivered across the Oise and

the Ailette and the French were forced back to the line Epernay-Bienraucourt. Thus the new German attack extended first over a front of thirty miles and is now prolonged to the Oise. It has penetrated southward to a great depth of twenty miles in the same pocket-shaped form that the attacks on the St. Quentin and Armentières sectors assumed.

To deny its success is childish. It has torn from the allies valuable positions, casualties and war material, and by opposing German strength to allied weakness has contributed to that reduction of our fighting strength, which is the chief aim of the enemy.

A succession of such blows as those which the enemy has delivered since March 21, and under similar conditions of application of the German strength to our weakness, is not a prospect that can please any one and least of all Gen. Foch, whose talent for the offensive is acknowledged. It is incredible to us to notice how cool and confident the French remain in these difficult hours. To be the anvil and not the hammer is not congenial to the French temperament, and the sooner the holes can be reversed the better they will be pleased.

Foch's Task a Hard One.

But the task of our French commander-in-chief is an onerous one, for the allies do not possess the superiority of force necessary for a great offensive, while even Foch has no great liberty of maneuver in retreat, owing to the proximity of Paris to the line that was formerly called French.

But if the enemy can employ from thirty to forty divisions for a thrust across the Aisne toward the Marne, then even Foch can detach nearly similar forces to meet him, and the probability is that an equality at least will soon be re-established on the Rheims-Soissons front. If the Germans force back the French from the Ailette to the Aisne, a much more threatening front will be formed against Paris, and the crown prince's armies will be in a position to press forward untidily in this direction.

But the battle front from the sea to Rheims is 100 miles long and it is still possible for the enemy, if he retains the initiative, to pursue the plan of alternating blows to which he has hitherto confined himself. The fundamental weakness of the allied position is the loss of the initiative.

WAR SUMMARY

(Associated Press.)

American troops are fighting with the French in holding up the new German rush and already have begun to make their presence strongly felt. One force of Americans, thrown into the battle on the important front between the Ourcq and the Marne, not only stopped an enemy advance, but actually won back seven and eight miles northwest of Chateau Thierry, but carried out what the French official statement characterizes as "a magnificent counter-attack" which threw back the Germans north of this wood.

On yet another front—that running east and west along the Marne—the French in co-operation with the Americans have evidently succeeded in bringing up considerably more of their artillery and are attacking in force along virtually the whole front from the Oise to the Marne.

Desperate fighting developed at many points on this front last night which resulted in the enemy making advances at a few points, notably in the region southwest of Soissons, where it is trying to batter in the tip of the allied salient. The village of Pernois was lost by the French in this area and they had to give a little ground farther south. The German attack was held elsewhere.

To the south between the Ourcq and the Marne ground was given and taken by both sides. The Americans were in the fighting here, scoring their success at Neuilly wood. Just to the south of this wood the French were obliged to concede the town of Neuilly La Poterie to the Germans after the place had changed hands several times.

Strong counter attacks were carried out by the French at other points on this front, and one of these enabled Gen. Petain's troops to recapture the village of Moosely. In the stretch southward to the Marne the Germans were held from any further advances.

In the German submarine attack on shipping along the American coast the important developments of the day included news of the safety of the steamer City of Columbia, which it was feared had fallen a victim of the raiders, and the landing of a boatload of fifteen survivors of the Porto Rican steamer Carolina. There was no definite news of any additions to the list of vessels sunk.

On the Aisne battlefield the German advance is waning, if it has not already been stopped, before the desperate resistance of the French. Sunday the enemy progress was slight, while on Monday the French and German gains on the western wing balanced each other. Now that the force of the German blow has nearly spent itself the offensive is turning into a series of battles for important positions.

Before the forest of Villers-Cotterets and between the Ourcq and the Marne the Germans are making violent efforts to drive the French from advantageous hill points. Villages on the eastern edge of the forest have been taken and retaken by the bitterly contesting forces, but the Germans, despite fresh troops, are gaining but slightly.

German U-boats in their campaign off the Atlantic coast have accounted for ten vessels, mostly small steamers and schooners, since May 25. There are yet no official or unofficial reports of loss of life due to the sinkings, although part of the crews of several of the smaller vessels and the passengers and crew of the steamer Carolina are missing. When a submarine began to shell the Carolina her 229 passengers and 120 members of the crew took to the boats and it is believed they are trying to reach the New Jersey coast. It is not yet clear how many submarines have been in action. Most of the

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vessels were attacked by one, but one captain reports seeing two. Naval officers at Norfolk have received reports indicating five enemy under-water wolves had been operating off the coast.

The situation north of the Aisne is similar. There the French have recaptured Mont Choley for the fifth time. German attacks elsewhere between the Aisne and the Oise, the line between Neoyon and Soissons, have been repulsed. West of Soissons the enemy has been held for no gains, although in its latest report, claims progress here and to the south.

Heavy attacks by the Germans between the Ourcq and the Marne to take the hill around Cocheret broke down with heavy losses. Along the Marne the activity has been slight, while from the Marne to Rheims the allied troops maintain their positions. Rheims is reported almost three-fourths surrounded by the Germans, who are within a mile of the city on the north, northwest, west and southwest and east.

On the British front the fighting is still confined to raids. British airmen continue their bombing operations and have accounted for twenty-two more German aircraft.

There has been heavy artillery firing on the American sector northwest of Toul, but no infantry action. In aerial combats there another German machine has been brought down. An American patrol east of Lunville, after being surrounded by a superior enemy force, fought its way through to the American line suffering only slight losses.

SUCCESS IN MACEDONIA

BIGGEST SINCE 1916

Greeks Organized With All Modern Contrivances on East Front.

(Associated Press.)

London, June 4.—The successful Greek attack at Sika de Legen was the biggest success on the Macedonian front since the autumn of 1916 which culminated in the fall of Monastir, says a Reuter dispatch from Saloniki, dated Saturday. Up to Friday evening the prisoners counted totaled 1,712.

Officers captured by the Greeks did not conceal their admiration for the manner in which the attack was conceived and carried out against a position always regarded as impregnable.

The Greeks captured the enemy first and second lines, the second being on a level, if not actually dominating, the third line. The first and second lines were powerfully organized with all modern contrivances.

The success improves the allied position considerably on a difficult sector. Several Bulgarian counter-attacks were frustrated by the allies' barrage fire, which inflicted severe losses.

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WOMEN PRISONERS SPEND THEIR TIME IN KNITTING

(International News Service.)

Canton City, Colo.—Confined in the state penitentiary here there are ten women who daily are doing their bit for humanity and the cause of democracy. Eight hours a day these women knit socks and sweaters for the Red Cross. They have reached an average of one dozen pairs of socks a day. One of the knitters is Mrs. Mary Angeline Geronimo, serving a life sentence, May Lamb, in for a term for twenty-one years, is another engaged in the Red Cross work.

RETAIL CREDIT MEN PLAN BIG MEETING AT BOSTON

(International News Service.)

Boston.—Plans are rapidly nearing completion for another war convention that is coming to Boston this summer. It is the national convention of the Retail Credit Men's association. It will take place at the Hotel Plaza hotel, Aug. 20 to 23. Five hundred delegates from all parts of the United States will attend. The credit situation that has arisen as a result of the war will make the convention of supreme importance.

HEARD BY LARGE AND ATTENTIVE AUDIENCE

Austin Peay Opens His Campaign at Trenton Under Favorable Auspices.

Trenton, June 4.—Hon. Austin Peay, of Clarksville, candidate for the democratic nomination for governor, opened his speaking campaign here yesterday afternoon, addressing an unusually large and attentive audience. Mr. Peay spoke in the county court room, one of the largest auditoriums in the western section, which was filled to its capacity.

The candidate was introduced by W. W. Herron, who paid a tribute to Mr. Peay's ability as a man, and predicted a clean, able administration if he was elected governor of the state.

Mr. Peay was accompanied by his manager, C. H. Love. He was met on arrival by a large delegation of business men, and previous to the hour of speaking a large number of friends collected at the hotel to welcome the distinguished visitor. Many, wishing an auspicious day for the opening of the campaign, were received during the day.

(The speech appears in full on another page in this edition.)

MASSSES IN GERMANY DEPRESSED BY ORDER

Food Scarce—Miserable Lot Would Make End of War Welcome to Deserting Greeks.

(Associated Press.)

London, Monday, June 3.—British Admiralty press wireless Press.—A neutral who has just returned from Rhineland has told the Times correspondent at The Hague that great endeavors were made to celebrate the German advance and to represent it as a glorious victory for the kaiser. There was a good deal more drinking than usual, but there was nothing extra to eat, for the simple reason that it did not exist. The rejoicing was restricted to those who are of more than military age, who sit in cafes and dispose of the fate of Europe over a pot of beer.

The masses of people who are very depressed, especially since the new order for lowering the bread ration was announced. At Muelheim, the whole population has been living on four pounds of bread for each person because there was nothing else to be had. No potatoes, nothing whatever besides bread. The people are so discontented that they talked of striking, but were afraid, being greatly intimidated by the military. The informant said: "Germans repeatedly assured me in the manufacturing towns and industrial districts that boys from 12 to 15 years old are trying to suppress disturbances, should they arise. The people are so depressed and so depressed that the war ended at once. So would the Greeks who deserted from the Greek army to Germany, for their lot is very unhappy. They now work on German railways keeping the tracks in order."

EXPLOSION REPORTED IN MARSEILLES FACTORY

(International News Service.)

Paris, June 4.—An explosion occurred in an ammunition factory at Beausens, near Marseilles, on Monday. There were some victims, but the number is not known.

OLDTIMER, 98, DECIDES HE WILL "SETTLE DOWN"

(International News Service.)

Pittsburgh, Pa.—William M. Davis, 98 years old, has decided to settle down here after crossing the continent twenty times. "I am going to spend the rest of my days here," he said, "unless the old roving spirit again seizes me." Mr. Davis says he remembers New York when its population was 300,000 and the city was lighted with oil lamps. He also remembers when the New Yorkers kept pigs and chickens in their back yards and carried water from pumies in the middle of each block.

Veteran Tries to Enlist.

(International News Service.)

Greensburg, Pa.—Alexander Sebie, an 89-year-old Confederate veteran, appeared before Sergt. C. C. Hackett at the local recruiting station seeking to enlist. He said he had been a member and could help Uncle Sam by driving a mule team in France.

ENEMY DRAWING IN 'ROUND RHEIMS

Only Change in Battle Line East of Chateau-Thierry—Circle Strengthening.

FIGHTING IS MOST BITTER

Both South of Ourcq and East of Forest of Villers-Cotterets.

(Associated Press.)

London, June 4.—The line north and south of the Ourcq, east of the forest of Villers-Cotterets, was the scene of the heaviest fighting Monday on the Aisne front, says the Reuter correspondent with French headquarters in France. German gains were counterbalanced by French gains and the situation is more hopeful.

"Today," continues the correspondent, writing Monday night, "the fighting has been hardest along the eastern edge of the forest of Villers-Cotterets and southward between the Ourcq and Marne valleys. The thick mass of forest offers great opportunity for the development of German tactics in an advance by infiltration."

"The Germans attacked in the morning with two divisions, one of which, the Twenty-eighth, was entirely fresh. The fighting was terribly bitter, centering around the villages of Longpont, Corcy, Faveroles and Trocennes. Before Longpont the Germans failed. Corcy was taken by the Germans and retaken by the French."

Ultimately Successful.

"Faveroles was the scene of a desperate German assault which ultimately was successful, but Trocennes and Corcy, despite repeated attacks, remained in the hands of the French. Our counter-attacks kept the Germans constantly in check and enabled the line of villages in front of the forest to be maintained. The Twenty-eighth German division have released the first guards division, which suffered heavily in the opening days of the battle."

"South of the Ourcq the fighting was almost equally obstinate. Toward evening, however, the battle diminished in violence, probably because the German infantry was exhausted by the many hours of fighting in the terrific heat and was unable to resume its attacks."

Nothing for Day's Work.

"On the whole the enemy has nothing to show for his day's work. The only change in the battle line east of Chateau-Thierry is the drawing in of the German line around Rheims. This line, beginning at St. Leonard, on the Aisne-Marne canal, southeast of the city, passes through Munketty range on a hill immediately east of Rheims. Thence it goes through Betheny to the north and Trois Fontaines on the northwest and runs southward between the suburb of St. Brice and the city itself to La Harpe. None of these places except St. Leonard is more than a mile away from the city. The Germans now have an armed circle almost three-fourths of the way around the city."

Retaken by Allies.

(Associated Press.)

With the French Army in France, Monday, June 3.—The allies are now checking the German armies everywhere.

Terrific struggles took place today when fresh German divisions entered the line between the Ourcq and Oise rivers, trying with the greatest determination to enter the forest of Villers-Cotterets. The town of Faveroles, on the edge of the forest, was retaken by the allies after the most fierce fighting, in which the French displaced almost 100 men against superior numbers. Choley hill, north of the Aisne, near Choley-Au-Bac, was the scene of some terrific fighting. The height changed hands five times and eventually was carried in an assault by a battalion which had distinguished itself at Douaumont in the defense of Verdun.

A cavalry corps executed one of the most brilliant performances of the war by marching 160 miles and immediately joining in the hottest part of the battle, where it fought off enemy attacks, causing heavy losses to the Germans.

Women who do not study the ads with a view to finding something new to buy. They look for information about things they intend to buy—not for a new opportunity to spend, but for a new opportunity to save.

W. J. OLIVER OFFERED SALARY OF \$100,000

(Special to The News.)

Knoxville, June 4.—A salary of \$100,000 per year and \$100,000 stock in the corporation has been offered W. J. Oliver, prominent Knoxville manufacturer of munitions, to take the position of executive and organizer of the work of a mammoth shipbuilding concern. Mr. Oliver stated that he has the offer under advisement and will make known his decision within the next few days. He says his business interests here must be given first consideration, and he will not leave the local industries, even for so tempting an offer as this, unless all conditions are favorable to such a relinquishment of his personal direction of the enterprise.

"NOT IN HURRY," SAYS TELEGRAPHERS' CHIEF

(Associated Press.)

Washington, June 4.—A decision as to whether he will call a strike of commercial telegraph operators will be made, S. J. Koenekamp, president of the Telegraphers' union, announced today, after he reaches Chicago, whence he will go tomorrow. "We are not in a hurry about going out," he said.

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